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LEON TROTSKY'S QUEST FOR A U.S. VISA, 1933-1940

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On 25 May 1933, Leon Trotsky wrote from his home in exile, to the U.S. Consul in Istanbul, requesting "authorization to enter the United States and to remain for a period of three months" to conduct historical research for a book that would compare the American and Russian civil wars. To allay anxieties about admitting a committed revolutionary, the fifty-three-year-old former Red Army leader assured the Consul that:

my journey has no relation whatsoever with any political aim. I am ready to undertake the categorical obligation not to intervene, either directly or indirectly, in the internal life of the United States."

The U.S. Consul forwarded Trotsky's letter to the State Department, which denied his request because of his political views. Because Trotsky had received permission to establish temporary residence in France in early July, the U.S. Government's denial may have seemed of minor significance.

Yet, from 1934 until his death in August 1940, the U.S. Government's refusal to admit Trotsky played a recurring role in his personal and political life. During those years, he repeatedly sought to secure admission to the United States. This essay, which documents a heretofore unknown aspect of Trotsky's political life, has three purposes. The first is to examine his efforts to gain admission to the U.S. The second is to use Trotsky's political behavior, during his quest for a visa, to explore his conflicts with those political cultures with which he interacted. In his efforts to obtain a U.S. visa, Trotsky used political tactics and made political decisions that often alienated the very people whose assistance he needed. While there were many reasons for that behavior, the most important was his inability to appreciate, and unwillingness to respect, the complexities of U.S. political cultures, especially liberal and radical political cultures. As an exile from a country and party with a political culture that shared little with U.S. political traditions, this is hardly surprising. What deepened this cultural chasm was that his American comrades, from whom he took advice, were themselves on the fringes of American political life. Finally, the essay offers an answer to an important question scholars have not asked--why was Trotsky murdered when he was?

Trotsky arrived in France on 23 July 1933, and lived there for almost

two years before the French Government rescinded his visa, forcing him to establish temporary residence in Norway. Even before he left France, a U.S. Committee for Asylum for Trotsky formed. In soliciting popular support for its cause, Quincy Howe, its provisional chairman, wrote that Trotsky "is being hounded and persecuted by the French police and stands in imminent danger of assassination by his enemies or deportation to some isolated tropical island... For him this remains 'the planet without a visa'". Howe argued that the "right of asylum is one of the oldest democratic principles," and that "[t]here are no legal barriers to Trotsky's entrance into the United States." For that reason, he continued, the "Committee proposes to present to the State Department at Washington a petition...asking the government to grant Leon Trotsky a visa permitting him to enter and reside in the United States in order to pursue his literary work." The Committee failed to secure Trotsky a visa. However, its effort proved a harbinger of later exertions on his behalf by people who did not share his views, but who believed the right of asylum to be a fundamental democratic right.

Soon after the August 1936 trial of Zinoviev, Kamenev and fourteen others in Moscow, the Soviet Government exerted considerable diplomatic and economic pressure on the Norwegian Government to expel Trotsky. Outraged by the threat to Trotsky's asylum, American Trotskyists, Socialists and liberals appealed to Norway "to assure the continuation of comrade Trotsky's right of asylum." Instead, the Norwegian Government placed him under virtual house arrest. That action evoked an outcry. In the U.S., France, Spain, Czechoslovakia and other countries, his supporters and allies created committees for the defense of Leon Trotsky. Trotsky's supporters in the committees, as well as socialists and liberals who condemned the unwarranted violation of his political rights, worked to publicize his plight, to secure him safe asylum and to establish committees of inquiry to investigate the charges made against him in Moscow.

In October 1936, the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky (hereafter referred to as A.C.D.L.T.) was formed. Its stated goals were "to help obtain for him [Trotsky] the normal rights of asylum and to aid in the formation of an International Commission of Inquiry, which shall examine all the available evidence [relevant to the charges made against him at the August 1936 Moscow trial] and make public its findings. The letter announcing the A.C.D.L.T.'s formation made it clear that "support of this appeal in no way necessarily indicates any commitment...to Trotsky's views on politics. Among its members were some of America's most prominent intellectuals, liberals, civil libertarians, former members or fellow travellers of the Communist Party, Socialist Party members and anarchists, as well as members of the Workers' Party of the United States (WPUS), a Trotskyist Party founded in 1934. The

largest and most active of the A.C.D.L.T. branches was the New York committee; in fact, New York liberals and radicals created, dominated and defined the A.C.D.L.T.

Like the 1934 Committee for Asylum for Trotsky, the A.C.D.L.T.'s founders viewed it as being above partisan politics because it pursued goals which all defenders of democratic liberties could embrace. Although some members abhorred Trotsky's politics, they joined the A.C.D.L.T. because they believed that its goal was the defense of a fundamental democratic right. Horace Kallen, one of its founders, eloquently conveyed this motive when he wrote that he joined because democratic liberties

are today in jeopardy almost everywhere in the world... Trotsky is an apt symbol of the necessity to make secure beyond question the right of asylum and the right to equal justice... If they can be established for the terrible Trotsky, they can hardly be denied to the anonymous, stateless multitudes who are in flight from persecution, cruelty and demoralization at the hands of anti-democratic dictatorships in the world. Leon Trotsky is the symbol of them all.

To accomplish its goals the A.C.D.L.T. pursued several strategies simultaneously. Its members wrote numerous letters to the Norwegian Government protesting Trotsky's house arrest, and worked diligently to urge the Roosevelt administration and Mexican President Lazaro Cardenas to grant Trotsky asylum. There appears to be considerable merit to the A.C.D.L.T.'s claim that it "was instrumental in obtaining his visa for Mexico." Although the details remain unclear, some of his American supporters and defenders made a serious but unsuccessful effort to convince the Roosevelt administration to grant Trotsky asylum.

Although the A.C.D.L.T. sprang from the organizers' sincere political indignation over Trotsky's plight, his comrades had been working behind the scenes to create the committee and a commission of inquiry, and to secure asylum in the U.S. for Trotsky. The opportunity afforded by the A.C.D.L.T. was not lost on the WPUS. At Trotsky's instigation and direction, the party had dissolved itself in May 1936, and its members joined the Socialist Party of America for the express purpose of weakening that party and winning over its militant members to Trotsky's cause. During the next eighteen months, the Trotskyists struggled unsuccessfully within the Socialist Party to achieve both goals.. The A.C.D.L.T.'s creation and the Socialist Party's prominent role within it provided the Trotskyists with a timely opportunity that they used to turn to their and Trotsky's advantage. In November 1936, the Trotskyist leaders issued a circular to its formally dissolved, but very active, local committees. It announced that:

At present the most important programatic issue is asylum for Trotsky; as soon as Trotsky is safely settled in a safe haven, our work thereafter will center around the issue of securing a complete, impartial investigation of the Moscow trials; we plan to set up or to have set up organizationally independent of this committee, a Legal Commission of distinguished jurists in America; at the same time we will work for an international commission to sit as a tribunal, to take Trotsky's own testimony and hand down a verdict. BUT THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE [sic] we must concentrate on the question of asylum for Trotsky.

Although the "question of asylum" was being pursued both in Washington and Mexico City, Trotsky's comrades were particularly anxious that Mexico's provisional agreement to grant him asylum not be changed. The circular outlined which Mexican political groups opposed or supported Trotsky's receiving asylum and instructed its members that:

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO SHOW PRESIDENT LAZARO CARDENAS, MEXICO CITY--THAT STRONG FORCES CAN SUPPORT TROTSKY IN HIS SEARCH FOR ASYLUM. TELEGRAMS TO CARDENAS FROM TRADE UNIONISTS, LIBERALS, ETC. ARE NEEDED IMMEDIATELY, CONGRATULATING MEXICO ON EXTENDING ASYLUM TO TROTSKY. THIS TASK IS ONE OF YOUR MAIN JOBS FOR THE NEXT WEEKS....

While Mexico's grant of asylum to Trotsky pleased his American comrades, his son, Leon Sedov, reacted angrily to the prospect:

A deplorable mistake in relation to Mex.. Before this question was resolved in favor of the U.S., i.e. before a definitive rejection was received from the U.S. (by no means [was it] proven that such a rejection is inevitable), it was a mistake to raise the question of Mex., because this would facilitate rejection in the U.S., but meanwhile the U.S. decision would have been resolved. I personally consider Mex. [to be] an extremely dangerous experiment and a completely unsound decision that may very possibly take on a tragic character. Meanwhile it is already impossible to retreat. The news has already circulated in the newspapers and the authorities [*vlasti*, i.e. the Norwegian Government] demand a rapid departure. I convey this only for you and close friends...I think that the American friends should tell themselves that M. [Mexico] is not a resolution of the issue and to direct all efforts towards a U.S. [resolution]. I have been told that in January a change in the higher administration [of the

U.S. Government] will occur and that it would have been expedient to raise the issue decisively after this change.

As we shall see, Trotsky's American comrades took Sedov's advice to heart.

The A.C.D.L.T.'s first goal was achieved on 9 January 1937, when Trotsky arrived in Mexico. Two days later, he telegraphed the A.C.D.L.T. and offered his full cooperation in an investigation of the charges made against him in Moscow. He attached great importance to the A.C.D.L.T.'s work and the establishment of an international commission of inquiry. Within a week of his arrival in Mexico, Trotsky met with several leading American Trotskyists to plan how to influence and direct "the activity of the Committee." His supporters on the committee worked tirelessly to ensure that its work served Trotsky's interests and kept him informed of its meetings and activities, thereby enabling him to react to and offer advice about its activities.

Simultaneously his supporters continued to urge the Roosevelt administration to grant him a visa. There was a brief glimmer of hope. On February 11, Trotsky received a telegram from Walter Casey: "Hold everything help coming I.N.S. [Immigration and Naturalization Service]." In 1935, Roosevelt had appointed Casey to the Municipal Court of the District of Columbia. Casey's effort to use his connections to obtain a visa for Trotsky failed.

Although the A.C.D.L.T.'s efforts generated some public support for an international commission of inquiry, Trotsky was dissatisfied. In early March, he wrote to his supporters condemning their political submission to liberals on the A.C.D.L.T. and warning that the liberals' dominance would "lead to a complete disaster." In a March 1937 confidential letter "To all the comrades in the committee," "which resulted from a long talk with Comrade [Herbert] Solow," Trotsky lashed out against the "weakness of the policy of our comrades [on the A.C.D.L.T.], or better, the full absence of any policy, [which] paralyses the activity of the committee and threatens to lead it into an impasse." His chief criticism centered on his comrades' inability to organize an international commission, a failing he attributed to "a certain dilettantism, joined by a political confusion." He demanded "the immediate creation of the inquiry commission by presenting to the meeting a list of the first members of the commission, and by using the meeting to stimulate and encourage the liberals in this decisive matter."

Virtually all A.C.D.L.T. members, even the Trotskyists, hoped to enlist prominent people who were perceived as politically neutral and fair to serve on the commission so as to guarantee its appearing to be impartial and thereby win broad support. Trotsky believed that "[t]his is a purely formalistic, purely judicial, unpolitical and unMarxian conception." So convinced was he in the power of the evidence, at his disposal, to discredit the slanderous charges

levelled against him in Moscow that he viewed the commission's composition as irrelevant: "A small inquiry commission, even though composed of modest rank-and-file people (if the authorities hesitate) can accomplish some very good work."

Trotsky then gave his followers a stern lecture on the difference between liberals and Trotskyists, and how the latter should behave vis-a-vis the former.

I appreciate highly the participation of Mr. [John] Dewey in the committee. I understand that he cannot act otherwise than he does. He is not for Stalin and not for Trotsky. He wants to establish the truth. But your position is different. You know the truth. Have you the right to hide it? You have the same duty as the liberals to preserve your political identity within the committee. The declaration of principles or purposes must reflect the presence of both parties to the committee....But you enter into alliance with honest liberals on their basis in order to convince public opinion of the justice of your case. You invite the Stalinists to do the same on a common basis.

Every political action, especially when based upon a bloc, begins with the delimitation from the open and perfidious enemies. Only when the arena is demarcated can we permit ourselves maneuvers, alliances, and concessions. Otherwise we betray ourselves and our genuine friends. Nothing is more dangerous in politics than to help the enemy preserve a friendly mask until the decisive moment....

We have written many things about the Marxist rules of coalition: (a) not to lose one's identity, (b) to view the ally as the possible adversary, (c) to preserve for one's self the full rights of criticism, (d) to supplement the bloc action with independent actions, (e) to be ready in favorable circumstances... to take the full initiative of action when allies are hesitating, etc....The failure of our comrades [in the committee] belongs in principle to the same category as the failure of the Chinese Communists after their entrance into the Kuomintang.

Trotsky ended by instructing "the comrades in the committee" on what needed to be accomplished immediately: "The delegation of the sub-commission to Mexico must be decided and organized in two or three days...it is necessary to establish the list of people for the commission itself...to begin the work immediately after the return and report of the delegation." The importance that he attached to the inquiry commission is clear from his description of what he was sure would be its findings: "The greatest historical, philosophical, and psychological book of our time will be written by the commission of inquiry."

Trotsky's views on the inquiry commission's composition and "Marxist rules of coalition" may have been appropriate within a Marxist party, but they were not appropriate-in fact, they were potentially destructive-to an American political coalition that sought to defend his rights not because of who he was, but because the "right of asylum is one of the oldest of democratic principles." His criticisms illustrate his inability or refusal to understand and respect the principles shared by American liberals and radicals. Most of the A.C.D.L.T.'s members did not share Trotsky's political views, but rather viewed him and his case as a symbol. The A.C.D.L.T.'s early successes were due precisely to the fact that it consisted of a coalition of different political interests that shared a deep belief that he deserved asylum and an impartial inquiry. Without the appearance of impartiality, it would have been ineffective in winning popular support, as the resignation of Freda Kirchwey, one of the A.C.D.L.T.'s founders, made clear. Trotsky simply dismissed the A.C.D.L.T.'s unifying principle as "dilettantism."

Soon after and apparently independent of Trotsky's intervention, the American, English, French and Czechoslovak committees formed an Investigating Commission to review the Moscow trials. Soon after, the sub-commission's members were selected. On April 10, 1937, the Dewey Commission, as it has come to be known, began its week-long hearings in Mexico.

Whether or not the Dewey Commission was an impartial body is beyond this essay's scope. So too are the hearing's details. Based on the hearings and documents presented by Trotsky, the sub-commission found him innocent of the crimes attributed to him at the first two Moscow trials. More important to this essay is the fact that Trotsky's graciousness toward the commission's and A.C.D.L.T.'s members, as well as his eloquent performance during the hearings, generated considerable respect and sympathy for him among a group of active, influential and, in some cases, rich Americans, whom Trotsky and his American comrades diligently courted in his effort to gain admission into the U.S.

Why did Trotsky want to enter the U.S.? There were several reasons. Although he appreciated Mexico's granting him asylum, given his pledge not to interfere in Mexican affairs and Mexico's isolation from Europe, living out his life there was probably not an exciting prospect. Nor was the Mexican political environment friendly to Trotsky. The Mexican Communist Party (P.C.M.), the prominence and influence of which were on the rise during the Cardenas years, and the CTM (*Confederacion de Trabajadores Mexicanos*), the country's largest and most powerful labor organization, opposed Trotsky's asylum. Trotsky and his staff feared that President Cardenas was the only guarantee of his asylum. They also feared that the "Stalinists here...[are] 'preparing a favorable atmosphere' for the assassination of Trotsky and his friends." Furthermore, the

Mexican Trotskyist party was extremely small, about thirty members, and politically impotent. Finally, Mexico and the USSR were the only countries that provided material support to the Popular Front government during the Spanish Civil War. Support in Mexico for the Popular Front ran high and in some circles so too did sympathy for the USSR. Trotsky's consistent criticisms of both undermined political support for him in Mexico.

On the other hand, the political prospects for Trotsky and his movement in the U.S. seemed to be brightening. The American party was the world's largest Trotskyist party and its influence appeared to be growing. Trotsky's strategy to disband that party and infiltrate the American Socialist Party for the expressed purpose of either taking over that party or winning its militant wing to the side of the Trotskyists seemed to be working in mid-1937. In addition, Trotsky was almost totally dependent on the American movement for funds and personnel. Virtually all of his personal secretaries and guards in Mexico were Americans and he received periodic financial contributions from American sympathizers. Given these realities, asylum in the U.S. had much to recommend it.

After the Dewey Commission left Mexico, Trotsky and his supporters began serious private efforts to gain his admission to the U.S. In July 1937, Benjamin Stolberg, the labor journalist who had accompanied the Dewey Commission to Mexico, visited U.S. Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins to request permission for Trotsky to visit the U.S. in order to undergo a comprehensive medical examination. Stolberg told Perkins that, for the past few years, Trotsky had suffered from a mysterious ailment which he described as "inexplicable fevers." In fact, the real motive was not medical, as Herbert Solow's letter to John Dewey makes clear: "I note your appoint [sic] about having LDT for the September hearings [of the International Commission]. It is not essential, but it would be a great service to him. If Roosevelt could be induced to give him a seventy-two hour visa for that purpose, he would return thereafter to Mexico. The whole thing would be an experiment, to let Roosevelt judge whether he can safely give LDT a year's visa later on." Much to Stolberg's surprise, Perkins agreed to his request on three conditions: that Trotsky pledge not to make public his visit, to refrain from engaging in politics, and that Secretary of State Cordell Hull approve Trotsky's entrance. If Trotsky violated these terms, he "could never get in again." Trotsky readily agreed to the conditions: "I shall observe all conditions with absolute loyalty." Acting on Perkins' advice, Stolberg asked Dewey to make the case to Hull.^{tresca}

Trotsky's supporters used the time to buttress their case by having Dr. Harry Fishler, a Trotskyist living in Los Angeles, examine him and his wife, Natalia Sedova. His political sympathies and Trotsky's periodic medical problems notwithstanding, Fischler found "no reason to be alarmed" about

Trotsky's or his wife's health.

That summer the North Carolina Political Union unexpectedly invited Trotsky to lecture at the University of North Carolina, an invitation that he accepted in principle. Coming at the same time as the effort to secure a visa for medical purposes, the invitation created both problems and possibilities. One of Trotsky's secretaries in Mexico wrote to his comrade Joseph Hansen in New York:

We are writing to ask whether this acceptance may not, in your opinion, prove prejudicial to the possibilities of eventually securing a visa to come to the States in connection with the [planned September meeting of the International Commission of] inquiry. If the PC [Political Committee] thinks it advisable to continue the negotiations with this group, we would be glad to have you enter directly into relations with Heard and his organization. Naturally, you won't enter into discussion with them as the Political Committee, but merely as Trotsky's personal friends who are acting as his representatives in the matter.

Trotsky's comrades contacted Stolberg and Suzanne LaFollette, the A.C.D.L.T.'s Treasurer, to discuss the best strategy to pursue. In early August, LaFollette wrote to Trotsky of their plan:

If the university asks the Department to admit you for the purpose of delivering a lecture, that will afford you the opportunity to ascertain the attitude of the State Department without laying yourself open to a direct refusal which would establish a most unfortunate precedent...in case the State Department refuses the request of the university, that will leave quite unprejudiced our efforts to get you in on the grounds of health....We also strongly advise against any attempt to combine the visit to Chapel Hill with an appearance before the Commission [of Inquiry] or with a permit to come here because of health. If these purposes get mixed up with that of coming for a lecture, then a possible refusal of the State Department would then mean a refusal on all grounds at once.

If the university succeeds in getting permission for you to come, then that visit would set an excellent precedent for another visit on other grounds.

I hope that your followers will understand this. I have a fear-perhaps unfounded-that their zeal may cloud their judgement in this matter.

Later that month the State Department refused to grant Trotsky a visa to lecture on the grounds that his political views had not changed since it rejected his 1933 application. When Dewey finally met with Hull in late October 1937, the latter's response was hardly a surprise. Hull apparently explained to Dewey that he had to reject the request because, given Japan's military aggression in the Far East, the government had no desire to anger Stalin.

By late 1937, Trotsky's prospects of gaining admission to the U.S. did not seem bright. Several times the State Department had rejected his indirect overtures for a visa. By then, popular support for Trotsky in the U.S. was waning for several reasons. The Dewey Commission and the International Inquiry Commission had exonerated Trotsky, but ironically that vindication did not enhance support for him as people's political energies shifted to more pressing and ominous events in Europe, in particular the Spanish Civil War and Nazi Germany's aggressive behavior. Having fulfilled its role, the A.C.D.L.T. was virtually moribund by October 1937; in February 1938, it voted to dissolve itself. Trotsky expressed his disappointment and anger in a letter to Herbert Solow: "The necessity to dissolve the Committee after a year of work is, however, a great defeat and terrible waste of energies. Now you must begin again. It is the fate of political celibates! In any case the creation of a general defense committee against Stalinist gangsterism is now one of the most urgent tasks. The happenings in Spain are only a beginning. It is necessary timely [sic] to create cadres of political 'militias' against the murderers."

What Trotsky referred to as "the happenings in Spain" also contributed to the erosion of popular support for him. The outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 reverberated throughout Europe and the Americas. In the U.S., sympathy for the anti-fascist struggle of the Spanish Popular Front government was widespread, especially among liberals and radicals. Trotsky's and his comrades' criticisms of the Popular Front angered and bewildered many of its American supporters who questioned the wisdom of dividing the anti-fascist coalition at a time when fascist aggression threatened world peace.

Another factor weakened support for Trotsky. In June 1937, he advised his American comrades that the time had come to break with the Socialist Party and to re-form an independent Trotskyist party that "must again appear on the scene as an independent party...[n]ot later than November 7," that is the twentieth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution. He urged his comrades to launch a relentless campaign against that party's moderate wing: "We must denounce them as traitors and rascals." So fierce was the Trotskyists' political offensive that the party expelled them in October. Their tactics angered Socialists and their sympathizers who had actively supported the A.C.D.L.T. and the Dewey Commission.

Trotsky's accusations that liberals and radicals who did not share his

views on certain issues were Stalinists or GPU agents further diminished support for him. Among those he stridently criticized was Freda Kirchwey, one of the A.C.D.L.T.'s founders and the editor of *The Nation* which actively supported the Spanish Republican Government and the Popular Front, and which had published articles suggesting that the defendants' confessions at the first two Moscow trials appeared to have been genuine. Although one can understand his frustrations, the rude tone of his letters to and comments about the influential Kirchwey further eroded sympathy for him among American liberals.

Trotsky forcefully conveyed his intolerance of those who did not share his views to the anarchist, Carlo Tresca:

Against the attitude of the Nation and the New Republic [American liberal magazines], I totally share your indignation. The executioner is hideous, but more hideous is the priest in service of the executioner. As the agent of imperialism, Stalin's G.P.U. invokes hatred. Completely nauseating are the long-haired democratic preachers who pander to Stalin's executioners.

The struggle for the liberation of humanity is impossible without the simultaneous mobilization of contempt for such courtesans, sychophants, lackeys, bigots as the Nation and the New Republic.

His characterizations alienated liberals, radicals and intellectuals who had worked for his defense and who might have provided him with future support. Such people defended Trotsky's right to asylum and to an impartial hearing not because they shared his beliefs, but because they believed the rights of asylum, a fair trial and free speech were inalienable human and democratic rights. Although he sought to use these rights for his interests, Trotsky viewed these credos of American political thought as "purely formalistic, purely judicial, unpolitical and unMarxian conception[s]" Taken together, the A.C.D.L.T.'s dissolution, the Trotskyists' expulsion from the Socialist Party, and Trotsky's attacks on liberals and radicals reduced the ranks of his American supporters.

President Roosevelt's statement, on 25 March 1938, that the U.S. would continue to open its borders to those fleeing political and religious persecution briefly raised Trotsky's hopes. He wrote to a supporter that:

The statement is extremely important, especially from the viewpoint of general policy. I hope that it can also be used from the personal standpoint. In any case, everything possible must now be done.... Natalia [Sedova, Trotsky's wife] has required serious medical treatment for a long time.... Permission to stay six months would be truly salutary.... How should the question

be posed? I could pose it directly and officially from here. But to incur an official rejection would be very disagreeable. What means have you there? ...What must happen is that the authorities understand the situation, that is, that I do not have the slightest ulterior political motive.... What we need is a change of climate for several months and good medical treatment....The overriding question of the moment is that of the visa.

In May 1938, Suzanne LaFollette met with Assistant Secretary of State Adolf Berle and requested that he grant Trotsky and Sedova "a visa to visit the United States for a short period, say 60 days, to enter a hospital such as the Mayo Clinic or Johns Hopkins." Berle refused because "the admission of Trotsky created some very serious questions."

It is worth noting that, despite President Roosevelt's statement, the State Department had no intention of admitting revolutionaries like Trotsky to the U.S. Until his death, it rebuffed all efforts to secure him a visa because of his revolutionary views. But it never conveyed this directly to his representatives until December 1939, which meant that Trotsky's hopes of gaining admission, however dim, remained alive.

In July 1938, a new issue reinforced the State Department's anxieties about Trotsky. That month, an American named Robert Blackwell (aka Russell Negrete Blackwell), who fought with the International Brigades, was arrested in Spain. Blackwell was a former communist and a former Trotskyist whom the Spanish Republican Army's police accused of aiding the fascists and promoting counter-revolution. Police officials charged that Blackwell had been Trotsky's personal secretary and had participated in a sustained counter-revolutionary campaign. Blackwell was held over for trial before a military tribunal.

In September 1938, the American Committee for the Defense of Robert Blackwell was formed in New York. Its membership list was virtually identical to that of the A.C.D.L.T., and Trotskyists played an active role in its campaign to get the State Department to secure Blackwell's release. For this essay's purpose, the most intriguing aspect of the Blackwell affair was Trotsky's brief role in it. On 8 November 1938, Trotsky wrote to James B. Stewart, the American Consul General in the Federal District of Mexico, to inform him that:

I find it necessary to declare here that I have never met Mr. Blackwell. I have no connection of any kind with him. Furthermore he was never my secretary. My friends inform me that he belongs to an American political group which is completely opposed to the Fourth International.... I hope this information which I give you here and which I am ready to repeat before any authoritative body of the United States or Spain, can have some bearing on Mr. Blackwell's case.

Trotsky's letter is intriguing for two reasons. It was the first letter that he had written to a U.S. Government representative since his 1933 application for a visa. One can interpret this in one of two ways: either his compassion for the plight of Blackwell motivated him to intervene on Blackwell's behalf, or he sought to dissociate himself from a man the State Department viewed as politically undesirable in order to keep alive his own chances for entry into the U.S. Given Trotsky's lack of compassion for those who opposed him and his views, which Blackwell may have done, the former seems unlikely. Second, although Trotsky apparently had never met Blackwell and Blackwell was not his secretary, Trotsky's efforts to convey ignorance of Blackwell were disingenuous. In fact, Blackwell had established the Trotskyist party in Mexico (*Liga Comunista Internacionalista*) and belonged to the Workers' Party until 1935.

The timing of Trotsky's letter to Stewart is also of interest. In September 1938, two of Trotsky's acquaintances sought to help him gain admission into the U.S.. Diego Rivera, with whom Trotsky was living, visited the U.S. Consulate to discuss Trotsky's and his wife's deteriorating health and their need for competent medical treatment. Nothing came of this effort. Just prior to this, Trotsky received a letter from General Pelham Glassford, the former chief of police in Washington, D.C. and a member of the National Committee of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The two had met at Trotsky's house and discussed the feasibility of Trotsky entering the U.S. to conduct historical research. Glassford wrote to Trotsky:

I am sincerely interested in promoting unofficially some means by which it may be possible for you to take advantage of our libraries for a period of study. One factor of particular interest to me is the opportunity presented to test the liberty, freedom and tolerance which the United States professes so strongly.

However there is one matter of importance not discussed yesterday, and that is the extent to which you would expect special police protection while in the United States...I will be glad to take up the matter personally with Roger Baldwin, Director of the American Civil Liberties Union, and others whom I am sure will be greatly interested.

Trotsky promised Glassford that "I would live [in the U.S.]incognito... would choose my residence in agreement with the authorities..." would not participate "in the political life of the country," and "my guard would be assured by my personal friends." Reassured, Glassford urged Baldwin to seek a visa for Trotsky to live in the U.S. for "three months or more" and indicated that Trotsky was "reluctant to make application here without some assurance that it will not

be denied.” Baldwin’s efforts proved fruitless. In October, he informed Glassford that the government would refuse Trotsky a visa because “the climate of the Dies Committee [the U.S. Congress’ House Un-American Activities Committee] makes a visa impossible.... This does not, of course, preclude Mr. Trotsky from making an application...but by so doing he would almost certainly preclude any chance of later entry.”

This appears to have been the last attempt by Trotsky’s influential acquaintances to secure him a U.S. visa. They seem to have concluded that future efforts would be hopeless because the State Department had rejected him several times; Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins (their only ally in the administration) was under heavy political pressure; the military situation in Asia meant that the government did not want to anger Stalin; and the Dies Committee’s hearings were gaining momentum, thereby making admission of revolutionaries into the U.S. virtually impossible.

Yet, precisely at this time, his need for security increased. In September 1938, Mexico City was host to the World Congress against War and Fascism and the Latin American Labor Congress (both of which were Comintern front organizations), which Trotsky and his staff viewed as “gathering places for GPU agents” who “will use the Congress against Trotsky personally [and] against his right of asylum.” He urged his followers to “[m]ail as soon as possible known names of congress delegates who are GPU agents.... This is a matter of great importance.”

The arrival of Spanish Civil War refugees in Mexico alarmed Trotsky. On 7 January 1939, he wrote to his attorney and comrade, Albert Goldman, of the imminent arrival of “1500 veterans” of the International Brigades: “I suppose that the selection of these people is done by the GPU and that agents of the GPU will form an important percentage of the 1500.”

He had reason to worry. Many of the thousands of International Brigade veterans who took refuge in Mexico perceived the anti-Popular Front politics of Trotskyists, during the Spanish Civil War, as tantamount to counter-revolution and support for fascism. Blackwell was only one of many who were accused of being a Trotskyist agent of fascism. In addition, the influx of veterans, many of whom were communists, threatened to, and ultimately did, alter the political positions of the P.C.M. and the CTM, much to Trotsky’s detriment.

Although prior to 1939, both of those Mexican organizations had opposed publicly Trotsky’s asylum in Mexico, their formal policy was to ignore him, not to legitimize him with undue attention. But, after mid-1939, as the veterans’ influence grew, both the P.C.M. and the CTM subjected Trotsky and his asylum to increasingly harsh attacks. That campaign intensified markedly after the P.C.M.’s Extraordinary Congress in March 1940, at which the veterans forced the party into a more militant stance. More broadly, the influx of Spanish

Civil War refugees introduced into the Mexican political culture many of the political views and behaviors that characterized the European left's struggle against fascism. The political climate in Mexico became increasingly unfavorable to Trotsky.

Trotsky was not alone in his concern about the P.C.M. The U.S. State Department also feared that party's influence and militancy, its support for the confiscation and/or nationalization of properties owned by U.S. nationals, its increasing denunciations of U.S. policies, its organizing efforts among Mexican nationals working in the U.S., and the alleged growth of support in Mexico for a "Soviet form of government as a solution to Mexico's economic maladjustments." Similar concerns fueled the work of the Dies Committee, although the Roosevelt administration sought to distance itself from Dies. Despite the differences that separated Trotsky and the U.S. Government, they shared a common enemy. The Nazi-Soviet Pact and the onset of WWII raised the possibility that previous State Department concerns about not angering Stalin might diminish, thereby enhancing Trotsky's chances to gain admission to the U.S.

A new possibility for Trotsky to enter the U.S. arose in October 1939 from a most unlikely source-the Dies Committee, formally known as the U.S. House of Representatives Special Committee on Un-American Activities. Established in May 1938, the Dies Committee, which was named for its chairman, Representative Martin Dies of Texas, sought to expose alleged communist and subversive activities in the American labor movement and political life. Towards this end, it conducted congressional hearings. On October 12th, J. B. Matthews, the Committee's chief investigator, telephoned Trotsky's secretary, Joseph Hansen, and then cabled Trotsky to invite him to appear before the Committee and provide it with "a complete record of the history of Stalinism." Matthews promised Trotsky that he would arrange for visas for him and his wife, and for their protection. Hansen wrote at the time that:

[Trotsky] discussed the matter with all of his secretaries and guards. We were familiar, of course, with the Dies Committee and its investigations. All of us agreed unanimously that it was a Marxist political duty for Comrade Trotsky to accept the invitation, since for the Fourth International it was not any different from any other parliamentary body, could be used as a tribune to explain Stalinist degeneration to the workers, and deal a stiff blow at the same time against the reactionary politics of Dies.

Later the same day, Trotsky wired Matthews the following telegram: "I accept your invitation as a political duty."

Trotsky understood clearly the Dies Committee's purpose and role in American politics. He and his secretaries had followed closely its investigation of communist and trade union activities and organizations. His attorney, Albert Goldman, met several times with Matthews, who spoke frankly of the Committee's aims. After each meeting, Goldman conveyed their conversation to Trotsky. Following a November meeting with Matthews, Goldman wrote to Trotsky:

The Committee wants to connect the Communist Party with the Stalinist government because it wants to persecute the Communist Party under a new law compelling all parties which are agents of foreign governments to register. Our objective, as I told Matthews, will be to expose the really corrupt nature of Stalinism and its corrupting influence on the labor movement. I asked him to get you a regular visitor's visa which will permit you to remain in the United States for six months.

Over the next few weeks, Trotsky and his staff diligently prepared for his appearance before the Committee. But his decision to testify angered some members of the Socialist Workers' Party (S.W.P), the re-formed American Trotskyist party. At the October 17th meeting of the party's Political Committee, James Burnham introduced a motion "disapproving of Trotsky's acceptance, requesting him to reconsider and refuse to testify, and proposing that the S.W.P. publicly dissociate itself from and criticize his action if he did not comply with the request." The motion was defeated. In a letter to the Political Committee, Trotsky acknowledged that "[T]he [Dies] committee, like the whole parliament, is reactionary and pursues reactionary aims," but asked his comrades: "Why can we not appear before this committee with the purpose of establishing the truth?... To appear if necessary on the foe's territory and to fight him with his own weapons-that is revolutionary radicalism."

Nor was opposition to Trotsky's appearance confined to the S.W.P.'s leadership. Six S.W.P. members wrote to him of the Dies' political agenda and urged him to reconsider his decision:

...its role has been to discredit every shading of radical and liberal thought and action in the guise of ferreting out 'foreign agents', specifically those of Berlin and Moscow. Actually, as the war crisis deepens, the work of the committee has been to publicize evidence gathered or invented calculated to garner support for anti-labor legislation. In doing this it has earned the bitter hatred of the entire trade union movement both conservative and militant, as well as all leftist political organizations....At the conclusion of its investigations its evidence will be the basis for linking anti-labor legislation with

police activities against spies. Its work will result in greatly strengthening the police power of the federal government in illegalizing [sic] strike movements....[W]e feel you should carefully weigh your voluntary appearance... there remains the grave danger that objectively your appearance will hurt our movement rather than advance it, because your action as a voluntary one will be associated with future anti-labor legislation...and...your testimony will inevitably be distorted for red-baiting ends....

Trotsky countered that the Dies Committee "like the whole parliament is reactionary and pursues reactionary aims; but in so far as we participate in parliamentary activity we do so with the purpose of combatting these reactionary aims." He reminded the S.W.P. members that "[w]e ourselves created a Committee of bourgeois liberals in order to investigate the Moscow trials....The audience of this committee is thousands of times larger than that of the Dewey Committee." With this argument, which was reminiscent of the Russian Social Democrats struggle against liquidationism, he dismissed his critics. In so doing, he hastened a split within the S.W.P.

While there is no cause to question Trotsky's stated reason for testifying before the Dies Committee, it may not have been the only one. He knew that the U.S. Government had admitted Walter Krivitsky (the former head of the Soviet political police in Spain during the Civil War), who had testified before U.S. Congressional committees and received political asylum. It would not have been unreasonable for Trotsky to conclude that his testifying before the Dies Committee might produce the same effect. The invitation to testify offered him the opportunity to expose and condemn Stalin and Stalinism before a large audience, and to receive a U.S. visa.

Although Trotsky had accepted Matthews' invitation in mid-October, it was not until Joseph Hansen visited the American Consulate in Mexico City on 5 December 1939 to inquire about Trotsky's visa that the State Department learned of his intention to testify. A bewildered Consul Stewart cabled the State Department: "Wire instructions." Assistant Secretary of State Berle replied that the Consulate should "discretely" discourage Trotsky's visa application. Hansen and the Consulate staff discussed the pros and cons of Trotsky's making formal application for a visa. The latter claimed that it was essential to do so, but Hansen feared that a refusal "would bar him from receiving such medical aid...in case of desperate illness." Hansen inquired of Robert McGregor, a consular official, if Trotsky's applying for a visa "meant that Trotsky would have to declare that he did not believe in the overthrow of the government by force." McGregor reported that "I explained that he could see the form for himself....Hansen said that of course the Dies Committee would get no one who

was better equipped to furnish testimony on the Third International than Trotsky and so the arrangement would work to the mutual satisfaction of both parties."

A member of the Consulate's staff noted that:

...in spite of the Consulate General's suggestion that Mr. Trotsky might desire to apply for a visa, Mr. Hansen has carefully avoided any point blank question whether Mr. Trotsky would be considered admissible into the United States should he apply for a visa. It seems that Mr. Trotsky does not want to be put on record as having been refused a visa either directly or indirectly.

On 7 December, Matthews attended a meeting at the State Department at which Berle and other officials stressed the political dangers of inviting Trotsky to the U.S. and noted that, if his appearance produced undesirable political consequences, Dies would be politically responsible. Two days later, Hansen was informed that "in 1933, although Trotsky had never filed a formal entry blank, the American Consul in Istanbul found him 'ineligible for entry into the United States'.... We find that nothing since that time has changed essentially...[a]nd that department concurs in our decision. If Trotsky were to file an application for entry into the United States, we would be forced to turn him down." Henceforth, there could be no doubt: the U.S. Government had no intention of admitting the exiled revolutionary. Soon after, Dies withdrew the invitation to Trotsky.

In the U.S., Trotsky's intention to testify before the Dies Committee seriously undermined the already waning support for him. His American partisans consisted of liberals, civil libertarians, and S.W.P. members, all of whom ardently opposed the Dies Committee, although a majority of the S.W.P.'s Political Committee abided by his decision. His willingness to testify suggests that he failed to appreciate how much his American allies, and even some of his comrades, detested the Dies Committee and the impact that his decision to testify would have among them. Perhaps he believed that the anti-Stalinist positions of his liberal and radical supporters meant that they would understand his decision. He also failed to appreciate that the political principles and liberties which the Dies Committee threatened were among those that the A.C.D.L.T. was formed to protect. To his American supporters, those principles applied equally to Trotsky, Blackwell, and the CPUSA. To Trotsky, the revolutionary engaged in a life and death struggle with Stalinism, such principles seemed naive and perfidious.

The Mexican reaction to Trotsky's decision to testify before the Dies Committee was virulent and almost universal. The P.C.M. was especially angry. Those attending its 10 January 1940 meeting denounced the Dies Committee as a reactionary body that served the interests of American oil companies in Mexico and condemned Trotsky's willingness to testify before it.

Some charged that Trotsky was collaborating with Dies. The meeting passed a resolution calling for his expulsion from Mexico.

Trotsky denied allegations that he planned to testify about Mexican political affairs:

This, then, was an opportunity to give testimony relating to the history of "Stalinism", but in no case regarding the internal affairs of Latin American countries. I have never had nor do I have any documents relating to the activities of Latin American communists nor the petroleum question and I am not able to present anything regarding these matters before the Committee. I have not had nor do I have any intention to unmask the real or supposed plans of communists in Mexico.

The statement, designed to protect his asylum, did little to allay anger within Mexico, especially within the P.C.M. At its Extraordinary Congress in March, the party renewed its attacks against Trotsky and called for his expulsion. At a secret P.C.M. meeting in April, allegations that the muralist, Diego Rivera and "possibly Trotsky" had leaked sensitive information about the P.C.M. to the U.S. Government resulted in another call to make "every effort to get rid of Trotsky" and a pledge to "take punitive action against the informers." In reaction to Dies' charge in April that the P.C.M. sought the overthrow of the Mexican Government, the P.C.M. again demanded "the expulsion of Trotsky and all spies and agents of Martin Dies." Dies' public statement on 24 April that he might again invite Trotsky to testify further fueled the P.C.M.'s resolve "to get rid of Trotsky."

Such was the environment when, on 24 May 1940, the muralist, communist and Spanish Civil War veteran, David Alfaro Siqueiros and a band of twenty-five armed men entered Trotsky's compound, then fired some 200 rounds throughout the house. Trotsky survived, but one of his American guards, Robert S. Harte, was kidnapped and later murdered.

After the attack, fear gripped Trotsky's compound. No less anxious for his life, Diego Rivera contacted the U.S. Consulate and asked for a Border Crossing Card to allow him to enter the U.S. The Consulate agreed to press his case in Washington. Within a week, an Immigration and Naturalization Service (I.N.S.) Board of Special Inquiry convened in Brownsville, Texas to consider Rivera's application, which was promptly approved.

Rivera was a former communist and former Trotskyist. So one might wonder why he received such official courtesy. The reason is that, throughout the previous eighteen months, Rivera had been giving information about the P.C.M. and Mexican labor organizations, both to the press and to American consular officials in Mexico. The first known instance occurred in September 1938, when Rivera gave journalists in Mexico the names of alleged communists

working in the Mexican Government. After the Dies Committee's invitations to Trotsky and Rivera became public knowledge in December 1939, Rivera stated that his testimony would reveal "the extensive activities of Stalinist agents in Mexico and other countries in Latin America, and he again gave journalists the list of names that he had given them in 1938. Dies withdrew his invitation to Rivera and Trotsky on the same day.

Rivera's willingness to provide information about Mexican affairs did not end there. From January 1940, he met regularly and secretly with U.S. Consulate officials and provided them with information about communist organizations and objectives in Mexico, P.C.M. affiliations among the Spanish refugees, alleged P.C.M.-Nazi collaboration, internal P.C.M. politics, alleged P.C.M. and Nazi agents working in the Mexican Government, communist agents working in Mexico, and "alleged financial aid given by John L. Lewis' CIO to Mexican Labor Organizations. When the P.C.M. leadership at its April 1940 meeting charged that Rivera was leaking information to U.S. officials and the press, they were correct. Rivera had good reason to flee Mexico. The fact that, before leaving Mexico, he publicly called on President Roosevelt to "offer Trotsky asylum in the United States" to aid the U.S. "in combatting the Nazi-Soviet menace," only fueled the P.C.M.'s effort to expel Trotsky and "all spies and agents of Martin Dies," and increased the danger to Trotsky.

Whether Trotsky knew of Rivera's secret meetings with U.S. officials, and the special treatment he received for being an informer, is unknown. The two men had not spoken to each other for fifteen months, and each made it clear to all who would listen that neither spoke for the other.

One thing is certain. After the May 24th attack, Trotsky's need for secure asylum increased. The threat of being murdered had always been real. The deaths of many of his political supporters in the USSR and in Europe, and of his two sons-Sergei in a Soviet labor camp, Sedov of mysterious circumstances in Paris-strengthened his belief that his life was in constant danger. Although Trotsky claimed to have been "certain there would be an attempt" on his life before May 1940, after the bungled attempt by the Siqueiros gang, his fear of being murdered intensified. His compound was further fortified. The ongoing Mexican presidential election campaign made clear the precariousness of his Mexican asylum. The two leading candidates, Avila Camacho and Almazan, publicly stated their intentions to expel Trotsky. His days in Mexico appeared to be numbered. If Trotsky as an individual, the leader, theoretician, and embodiment of the Fourth International, were to play an active role in that movement and in revolutionary politics, he needed a secure place of asylum that permitted him close contact with his supporters. With war raging in Europe and Asia, the only possible places of asylum were in the Americas; of these, asylum in the U.S. was the ideal. Previous efforts to gain even temporary admission to

the U.S. had failed, and in the aftermath of the Dies Committee affair, Trotsky's support within the U.S. had diminished considerably.

In this context, Trotsky's writings and his staff's behavior during his last three months suggest that he pursued a dual strategy, designed to enhance the prospects of retaining his asylum in Mexico and to provide the U.S. Government with information of sufficient value to enhance his prospects for a visa.

During his last three months, Trotsky set aside the biography of Stalin on which he had been working, and devoted his energies almost exclusively to investigating the May 24th assault and its aftermath. He wrote on two related issues. First, he claimed that three Mexican publications-*Futuro*, *El Popular*, and *La Voz de Mexico*-received financial support from the N.K.V.D. (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, referred to by Trotsky as the G.P.U., its predecessor) in exchange for which they adhered to the Stalinist line. Related to this charge was his accusation that Lombardo Toledano, the C.T.M.'s leader, was a Soviet foreign agent. Second, he claimed that the Soviet Government, through the N.K.V.D., exercised complete control and direction of the Comintern and the communist parties of the U.S. and Mexico. What bound the two issues together was his urgent need to expose the NKVD network that he believed engineered the May 24th assault and that would try again because, as he noted, "Stalin seeks my death."

Let us first examine Trotsky's battle with the Mexican press and Toledano. During his three and a half years in Mexico, the P.C.M.'s newspaper, *La Voz de Mexico* (*El Machete* before October 1938) as well as the C.T.M.'s newspaper, *El Popular*, and its magazine, *Futuro*, had published numerous, often slanderous, accusations about Trotsky's political activities and intentions. In May 1940, Trotsky reached the limits of his patience and challenged the publications to substantiate their accusations.

Shortly after the May assault, *Futuro*, *El Popular*, and *La Voz de Mexico* asserted that Trotsky himself had engineered what they called a "self assault." Trotsky was outraged by the charge which he viewed as having two purposes: "(1) to stir up police hostility against the victim of the aggression and thus to aid the aggressors; (2) to cause, if possible, my expulsion from Mexico; that is to say, my transfer into the hands of the GPU." On 27 May, he wrote to the Attorney General of Mexico, the Chief of Police of the Federal District and the Secretary for Internal Affairs charging that these publications received money from the Soviet Government. He claimed that the "attempted assassination could only be instigated by the Kremlin; by Stalin through the agency of the GPU abroad," that the "GPU is particularly concerned with the problem of preparing public opinion for a terrorist act [and that]...[t]his part of the job is always assigned to the Stalinist press, Stalinist speakers, and the so-called 'friends of the Soviet Union.'"" To understand how and by whom the attack was

organized, "it is essential to categorically establish that the activity of the GPU is closely intertwined with the activity of the Comintern...[I]n the Central Committee of each section of the Comintern there is placed a responsible director of the GPU for that country." Therefore, "[t]he judicial investigation [into the May 24th assault], it seems to me...cannot fail to examine the work of the newspapers *El Popular*, *La Voz de Mexico*, and some collaborators of *El Nacional*."

El Popular and *Futuro* immediately initiated a libel suit against Trotsky. The evidence that he presented to the court sought to accomplish two aims: to show the interlocking network of the publications' editorial boards and to prove that the publications acted as agents of the Soviet Government, specifically the GPU. Trotsky's evidence in support of the former was far more convincing than that in support of the latter, which was circumstantial and aimed at turning the charges of slander and defamation against his accusers.

Trotsky also claimed that Lombardo Toledano, the C.T.M.'s leader and editor of *Futuro*, "took part in the moral preparation of the terrorist attack," and that "*Toledano knew in advance of the preparations for the attempt, even if in the most general way.*" He described Toledano as a "foreign agent of the Kremlin."

At the July libel hearing, Trotsky charged that *La Voz de Mexico* also received financial support from Moscow. That newspaper responded with a libel suit. Over the next month and a half, Trotsky worked tirelessly on a document that he would use to substantiate his charge and that was his last substantive work--"The Comintern and the GPU." Although he began the essay with the assertion that "[T]his document pursues aims which are juridical and not political," the piece is of inestimable historical value.

In it, Trotsky sought to prove that *La Voz de Mexico* received funds from the GPU in Moscow and that all communist parties and organizations sympathetic to the USSR did so. In the first part, Trotsky presented his views on the degeneration of the Soviet experiment, claimed that the GPU organized the May 24th attempt on his life, and charged that: "The editorial board of *La Voz de Mexico* knew of the impending attempt and was preparing the public opinion of its own party and sympathizing circles." In the second half, he presented some rather compelling substantive and circumstantial evidence in support of his accusation that "*La Voz de Mexico*, *El Popular*, and *Futuro* are tools of the GPU and enjoy its economic aid."

The U.S. State Department had come to similar conclusions. Within Mexico, Trotsky had reason to believe that the document would put an embattled P.C.M. on the political and legal defensive, thereby enhancing the possibility that he might be allowed to stay in Mexico. His intrusion into Mexican politics marked a sharp departure from his December 1939 statement

that "I have not had nor do I have any intention to unmask the real or supposed plans of communists in Mexico." But in fact, his 1939 statement and 1940 accusations were consistent-both sought to protect his asylum in Mexico.

To appreciate the political importance that Trotsky and his staff attached to his charges against the P.C.M., the Mexican radical press, and the Comintern, we will examine their meetings with U.S. Consulate officials after the May 24th assault. The process began, understandably, when he and his staff cooperated with the Consulate's investigation into the fate of his kidnapped guard. Trotsky's secretaries provided the Consulate's staff with information about the assault and Harte. In June, Robert McGregor of the Consulate met with Trotsky in his home and discussed Harte's case. He met again with Trotsky on 13 July "to learn of developments" in the investigation. Trotsky told McGregor in detail of the allegations and evidence that he had compiled while preparing "The Comintern and the GPU," although he apparently made no mention of that essay. He gave McGregor the names of Mexican publications, political and labor leaders, and government officials allegedly associated with the P.C.M. He charged that one of the Comintern's leading agents, Carlos Contreras (aka Vittorio Vidali), served on the P.C.M.'s Directing Committee. He also discussed the alleged efforts of Narciso Bassols, former Mexican Ambassador to France, whom Trotsky claimed was a Soviet agent, to get him deported from Mexico.

Five days later, Charles Cornell, one of Trotsky's secretaries, visited the Consulate and gave a staff member a "strictly confidential memo" from Trotsky that discussed the activities in Mexico of Enrique Martinez Riqui. Trotsky asserted that Riqui was a GPU agent in Latin America, who had allegedly "planned and directed" the 1940 purge of the P.C.M., but who operated out of New York and "has direct contact with Moscow."

Since the U.S. Consulate could do nothing to enhance Trotsky's security in Mexico and that many of the details which he gave to the Consulate's staff were of uncertain relevance to the investigation of Harte's disappearance, it is not unreasonable to conclude that Trotsky provided this information to enhance his value as a source, while simultaneously striking a blow against alleged Soviet agents in Mexico and the U.S., whom he believed threatened his safety. Both the Dies Committee and the State Department feared communist influence in the Americas-the former sought to link the CPUSA to Soviet agencies so as to suppress it. The information that Trotsky conveyed to the Consulate, while not new, responded to both bodies' concerns.

On 22 August, just such an agent, Ramon Mercador, murdered Trotsky. On 3 September, Joseph Hansen visited McGregor at the U.S. Consulate, informing him of Trotsky's three unpublished works on the Mexican press and "The Comintern and the GPU." The next day, Hansen gave McGregor those works and a secret memorandum of a conversation between a "Directing

Member of the Fourth International in New York and a prominent member, "W" [Whittaker Chambers], of the Fourth International". This material touched on a series of issues relating to Trotsky's murder. Ten days later, Hansen gave McGregor more documents and information found in Trotsky's desk about a number of individuals in Mexico, the U.S., and France, some of whom were suspected Soviet agents.

It is easy to interpret Trotsky's giving information about alleged communists and Comintern agents to U.S. Consulate officials as an understandable effort to identify and apprehend those responsible for the May assault and Harte's murder. He had every reason to be worried for his life. Viewed in this way, he acted in self-defense. No one could possibly deny him the right to do so. But, since it is not clear that the information that he gave to the Consulate was relevant to the investigation of the May assault, such an explanation is incomplete. There is another plausible way to interpret Trotsky's dealings with the U.S. Consulate, one that is consistent with his political behavior in Mexico and his acting in self-defense.

From 1933 until December 1939, Trotsky and his supporters worked persistently to obtain him a U.S. visa. Some of those efforts were made under false pretenses and with Trotsky's full knowledge. Stolberg's and LaFollette's efforts in 1937 to get him a visa for medical reasons were disingenuous and were clearly motivated by their desire to have Trotsky appear before the International Commission in New York or, at least, to provide a precedent for later securing him a long-term visa. LaFollette's desire to establish just such a precedent motivated her 1938 plea to Berle to grant Trotsky a visa for medical reasons. In fact, Trotsky's health, although not good, provided little reason for special medical treatment. In March 1939, he wrote to a comrade: "Your proposition of sending an American doctor here is not advisable. Nothing is new other than the aggravation of the chronic things. The general name of my illness is 'the sixties' and I do not believe that in New York you have a specialist for this malady." When his need for medical care proved to be unpersuasive, Trotsky changed tactics and allowed General Glassford and the ACLU to press for a visa to enable him to conduct historical research, the same reason that he had given in his 1933 request.

Trotsky's acceptance of the Dies Committee's invitation would have allowed him not only to expose Stalinism and issue a call for revolution, but also would have secured for him and his wife a six-month visa. His willingness to contribute to Dies' anti-communist and anti-labor witch-hunt severely damaged his credibility among his former American supporters. After December 1939, Trotsky had to rely on his own devices if he were to gain admission to the U.S.

In this context, Trotsky's behavior after the May assault suggests that he

had revised but not abandoned his tactics. From December 1939, he clearly understood that the State Department opposed his admission to the U.S., but the official courtesy and visas given to Rivera and Krivitsky may have rekindled his hopes. Therefore, we may plausibly view his writings and relations with the U.S. Consulate after May 1940 as another in a series of tactics that had dual purposes. His allegations against his enemies in Mexico put them on the defensive and offered the prospect that they would be seriously weakened and possibly outlawed. Either outcome might have enhanced his safety and enabled him to remain in Mexico. By providing the U.S. Consulate with information about common enemies, be they Mexican or American communists or Soviet agents, Trotsky hoped to prove his value to a government that previously had no desire to grant him a visa. Trapped as he was in the summer of 1940 in a dire predicament, such a strategy offered the possibility of success and few liabilities.

Before turning to the essay's final purpose, it is worth underscoring two points. First, Trotsky's political behavior towards the A.C.D.L.T., the Socialist Party, and certain U.S. liberals and radicals reflected his misunderstanding of, or contempt for, essential aspects of American politics and political culture. As a committed revolutionary raised in a unique political culture-Russian Social Democracy and Bolshevism-this is hardly surprising. The experiences and analyses that Trotsky derived from those movements were inappropriate and ineffective in America. To use all available forums to further the cause and to expose and weaken the enemy were the hallmarks of Lenin's, Trotsky's and Stalin's political tactics. Trotsky, the U.S. Government, the A.C.D.L.T.'s members and the Dies Committee may have all shared a common enemy-Stalin-but Trotsky's unswerving adherence to his revolutionary beliefs and behavior undermined all efforts to turn that common enemy to his advantage. Despite repeated appeals on his behalf, the U.S. Government feared his revolutionary philosophy. His U.S. liberal and radical supporters, for whom the means were as important as the ends, for whom the defense of inalienable rights was paramount, became disillusioned with his sectarian behavior. Tactics that had been effective in revolutionary Russia and the USSR failed miserably in the U.S.

Second, Trotsky's efforts to gain admission to the U.S. must be considered in light of his unusual dilemma. He was a hunted man, the object both of a sustained political campaign directed by the Kremlin, and of attacks by political assassins. He justifiably feared for his life. But he was also the personification of an ideological movement--Trotskyism--that was despised as much in Washington as it was in Moscow. Judged by one set of standards, his desire to do what was necessary to protect his and his wife's lives is understandable. Judged by another, his willingness to testify before the Dies Committee and to provide information to an "imperialist" government, in hope of securing a visa, may be interpreted as hypocritical. In this case, to Trotsky

himself, personal needs and political desires coincided.

One task remains. His discussions with U.S. Government officials and his accusations against Mexican publications and communists in 1940 force require us to consider an important question, one that historians have not asked before now. Why was Trotsky murdered when he was? Conventional wisdom holds that Stalin hated Trotsky and wanted him dead before Trotsky completed his biography of Stalin. Stalin's reasons for killing him were personal. No one denies that Stalin hated Trotsky and probably wanted him dead. But there are questions about the timing of the murder that require consideration.

Why was Trotsky not killed before August 1940? Ramon Mercador, Trotsky's murderer, had been in Trotsky's house nine times in 1940 before he killed him. Given that Mercador had had ample opportunity before 21 August, why did he not kill Trotsky earlier? Mercador's preparations for the murder were calculated and extended for two years. If the reason for killing Trotsky was to avenge Stalin's personal hatred, why did Mercador not kill him at the first opportunity?

Perhaps Stalin deferred Trotsky's murder until August 1940 because he needed Trotsky alive to lend credibility to the alleged anti-Soviet Trotskyist conspiracies that were the core of the Moscow show trials. But the last big show trial ended in March 1938. In December 1938, Ezhov, the head of the NKVD, was removed and the mass repression subsided. If the reason for killing Trotsky was personal, why did it take so long for Mercador to commit the foul deed? As the murders of Wolf, Klement, Nin and Krivitsky demonstrated, if the NKVD wanted to kill someone, it could do so quickly. In light of the May 1940 assault and Mercador's visits to Trotsky's house, one can not seriously consider the security around Trotsky to have been a deterrent.

But of course Mercador was not the first person to try to murder Trotsky; Siqueiros and his gang attempted to do so in May 1940. Or did they? The assumption has been that Siqueiros and Mercador were both NKVD agents. That they both used the same Mexico City address suggests that this is plausible. But we are again left to wonder why Mercador, who had been in Trotsky's house before the Siqueiros attack, did not kill Trotsky first, and why twenty-five heavily armed Spanish Civil War veterans managed to fire some 200 shots in Trotsky's compound, even into his bedroom where he and his wife were huddled behind the bed, but still not kill Trotsky. Uncoupling the two attacks provides a more reasonable answer. Siqueiros' stated reasons for assaulting Trotsky's compound were rooted in the Spanish Civil War, especially in Siqueiros' bitter reaction to the 1937 POUM uprising, what he called the "Trotskyist treachery in Barcelona." His stated intention was not to kill Trotsky but rather "to close what I [Siqueiros] called 'the counterrevolutionary headquarters of Trotsky in Mexico.'" Siqueiros was hardly the only Spanish Civil War veteran who hated

Trotsky.

Shortly after Siqueiro's assault, Mercador went to New York. When he returned to Mexico, he acted peculiar, nervous, edgy. His biographer and others have argued that his nervous condition was due to the fact that, while he was in New York, Mercador had received orders to murder Trotsky soon. Let us grant this. Still, the question remains. Why was the order given to kill Trotsky only in mid-1940? What precipitated the order? What had changed?

Here Trotsky's accusations that Soviet agents financed and directed *Futuro*, *El Popular* and *La Voz de Mexico*, U.S. consular officials' visits to his house, and his secretaries' visits to the Consulate raise an intriguing question. Did those accusations and discussions finally lead to the decision to murder Trotsky? Did the NKVD and the Soviet government fear that Trotsky's accusations against the C.T.M. and the radical Mexican newspapers, and his discussions with U.S. Government representatives, might expose their agents in the Americas? Did Moscow fear that his accusations that it financed and directed the C.T.M. and CPUSA would lead to outlawing those parties? Given the timing of the murder and the fact that the murder occurred only on Mercador's ninth visit to Trotsky's house, the possibility that Trotsky was murdered for calculated political reasons—to protect Soviet and Comintern agents, and communist parties in the Americas—rather than for personal reasons, cannot be ruled out. In fact, such a hypothesis seems more consistent with the available evidence.

To entertain seriously the hypothesis that Trotsky's murder resulted from calculated political considerations rather than personal animus means that we must also ponder its implications. Mercador had been recruited as Trotsky's assassin no later than spring 1938, while Ezhov headed the NKVD. In December 1938, the Politburo removed Ezhov and appointed Beria to head the NKVD. By August 1940, Ezhov and many of his underlings were dead or under arrest. Yet Mercador remained free to pursue his assignment. He was clearly not Ezhov's man. In mid-1940, Trotsky posed no serious threat to the USSR. The Fourth International was a small sectarian movement and Trotsky himself was more politically isolated than ever. The September 1940 Mexican presidential elections might very well have resulted in his having to leave Mexico. As a political threat to the USSR, Trotsky was insignificant. To paraphrase Stalin's remark about the pope—how many divisions did Trotsky have?

But Trotsky still could have posed a potential threat to the USSR. He could have betrayed, knowingly or unknowingly, the identity of Soviet spies and Comintern agents in the Americas to Mexican and/or U.S. officials. World War II had begun and the U.S. was the center of Soviet intelligence operations for the Americas and Pacific Rim, so exposing and disrupting espionage or intelligence

networks posed a serious threat. Trotsky's accusations might have been used by the Dies Committee to make membership in the C.T.M. and CPUSA illegal for U.S. citizens. Although Beria was in charge of the NKVD, he was not a member of the Politburo. As such, he could not make a decision as significant as murdering Trotsky without approval from Stalin and the Politburo. In view of the fact that the Politburo had removed Ezhov for not keeping them and Stalin informed, Beria would have been stupid to make the decision on his own initiative, and Beria was not stupid.

Only the opening of the relevant Russian archives will enable us to determine if Trotsky's murder was the result of a calculated geo-political decision. Until then, the hypothesis presented here provides an explanation that is consistent with the available evidence and Soviet behavior in 1940, and a plausible answer to the question, why was Trotsky murdered in August 1940 and not before then?

Notes

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1. I wish to thank the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies and the University of Pittsburgh's Center of International Studies for their generous support of this research. I also wish to thank Dana Reed, Aleksei Ovsiannikov, and the many colleagues who read the manuscript for their insightful comments. The archivists and staff at the Houghton Library at Harvard University and the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace provided me with valuable assistance for which I am deeply appreciative. All quotations from the Trotsky Archive at Houghton Library are with permission. This essay is a revised version of my article published in *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, 4 (1995), 76-102.
 2. Trotsky to The General Consulate of the United States of America, Istanbul, May 25, 1933. The National Archives, Record Group 59 (Records of U.S. State Department; hereafter RG 59).
 3. I use the term comrade or comrades to refer to an individual or individuals who belonged to a Trotskyist party.
 4. See Quincy Howe to Harry Elmer Barnes, Nov. 12, 1934, Herbert Solow Papers, Box 11 (Committee for Asylum for Trotsky folder) in archives of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace. The available evidence does not indicate who supported the Committee or signed the petition. According to Howe, the Committee hoped to

- attract "all democratically-minded people...[in particular] American scholars, historians, journalists, artists, writers...." Howe wrote that Trotsky planned to write "a study of the Civil War" while in the U.S.
5. See Walter Held, F.L. Denby, Morris Heller and Samuel Trilman(?) to Albert Glotzer, August 15, 1936, Socialist Workers Party Collection, Box 27 (Albert Glotzer International Correspondence), Hoover Institution. Held's real name was Heinz Epe.
 6. Trotsky frequently noted that the Soviet Government did not seek his formal extradition or deportation, either of which would have required a formal hearing and substantiation of the charges which had been made against Trotsky at the August show trial in Moscow. But in 1940, Trotsky wrote that "The Moscow trials of 1936-37 [sic] were staged in order to obtain my deportation from Norway, i.e. actually to hand me over into the hands of the GPU." *Writings of Leon Trotsky 1939-40* (New York, 1977), 352.
 7. Defense committees also existed in Canada, Mexico, England, Switzerland and Holland. These committees had the endorsement and support of the Labor and Second Internationals, political parties such as the POUM, and labor unions such as the CNT. A report on the ACDLT's activities and those of committees abroad can be found in "Report to the Members on the Work of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky," March 21, 1938. The full collection of documents relating to the ACDLT and the Dewey Commission can be found in the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky and Commission of Inquiry into the Charges Made against Leon Trotsky in the Moscow Trials ("Dewey Commission") in the Tamiment Library, New York University. Hereafter referred to as the ACDLT Collection.
 8. The October 22, 1936 letter from these six announcing the formation of the ACDLT referred to it as the Provisional American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky. ACDLT Collection.
 9. *Ibid.* Local committees also existed in Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Minneapolis, San Francisco and Cleveland.
 10. Horace Kallen to the Secretary of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky, March 19, 1937, ACDLT Collection.
 11. "Report to the Members," March 21, 1938, ACDLT Collection. In fact, members of the ACDLT appear to have played a role in getting Cardenas to consider granting Trotsky asylum. Anita Brenner, an ACDLT activist, urged her sister Leah, Diego Rivera's personal secretary, to have Rivera speak to Cardenas and his advisor, General

Mujica, on Trotsky's behalf.

12. On November 20, 1936, Martin Abern, an American Trotskyist, wrote to his comrade Joseph Hansen: "Apropos LDT [L.D. Trotsky], matters are quite serious.... From abroad we have had the most urgent requests to do all we can to help the situation. Whether efforts for a U.S. visa could prove successful, I don't know; but this matter is now being pushed most assiduously...." Joseph Hansen Papers, Box 83, Hoover Institution. Abern's reference to "urgent requests" "from abroad" does not make clear who was making the requests. But as the evidence presented below suggests, it may well have been Trotsky's son Leon Sedov.
13. Trotsky appears to have first conceived of the idea of an international commission of inquiry in 1935 in relation to the arrest of his son, Sergei, in the aftermath of the Kirov assassination and accusations that the alleged Leningrad Center had attempted to send a letter to Trotsky. *Trotsky's Diary in Exile, 1935*. Translated by Elena Zarudnaya (Cambridge, MA, 1958), 129-133. The precise role of Trotsky's supporters in the Socialist Party in getting Thomas and Allen to organize the committee remains unclear.
14. On the American Trotskyists' joining the Socialist Party of America and Trotsky's role in that affair, see Constance Ashton Myers, *The Prophet's Army. Trotskyists in America, 1928-1941*. (Westport, CT, 1977), 123-142; James P. Cannon, *The History of American Trotskyism* (New York, 1972), 216-256; M.S. Venkataramani, "Leon Trotsky's Adventure in American Radical Politics, 1935-7," *International Relations of Social History*, 9, 1 (1964), 1-46, esp. 6-12.
15. The circular is entitled "How to Set Up a Local Committee of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky." (T5282), Trotsky Archive. The Exile Period, Houghton Library, Harvard University. Hereafter referred to as Trotsky Archive. The emphasis is in the original. The copy of this document in the Trotsky Archive is undated and unsigned. The internal evidence suggests that it was written in November 1936, but the day of the month is unclear. Although the WPUS had by that time merged with the Socialist Party, the internal evidence makes it clear that this circular was drawn up by WPUS leaders.
16. Leon Sedov to Sara Jacobs, December 12, 1936, Papers of L. D. Trotsky and L. L. Sedov, Boris Nicolaevskii Collection, Box 365, folder 84, Hoover Institution.

17. Before disembarking, Trotsky signed a notarized statement pledging "to remain obliged to respect our [Mexican] laws and to abstain from making propaganda of your [Trotsky's] political-social creed [while on Mexican] National Territory." Notarized Agreement, January 9, 1937, Trotsky Archive.
18. Trotsky telegram to the ACDLT, January 11, 1937. ACDLT Collection.
19. Trotsky "To all the comrades in the committee," March 17, 1937, Trotsky Archive.
20. For example, see Herbert Solow letter to Trotsky in which he wrote: "I endorse a document which is...highly confidential. I have drafted it, and it will be acted on by a special sub-committee. I will show it to [Max] Schachtman. Otherwise, nobody else on the Committee [ACDLT] is going to see it. After we have your corrections and Schachtman's, and after the sub-committee approves it, we...will send it out...if you have no particular use for [it], please destroy it." Apparently Trotsky did destroy it, because I have been unable to find it in his archive. The letter is undated but, from the context, it appears to have been written in January or February 1937. Solow to Trotsky, nd, Trotsky Archive. Trotsky's comrades on the ACDLT sent him correspondence relevant to the ACDLT. See for example, Felix Morrow to Frank Trager (a member of the Socialist Party), April 9, 1937, on the importance of having a SP member on the sub-commission going to Mexico. Trotsky also received private correspondence between ACDLT members who were not comrades. For example, see Charles Beard to John Dewey, May 22, 1937. Trotsky Archive.
21. Walter Casey to Trotsky, February 11, 1937. Trotsky Archive. How many other such efforts were made and precisely when is unclear, but they did occur. On July 27, 1937, Benjamin Stolberg wrote to Trotsky about his meeting with Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins at which he "asked her to grant you permission to visit Johns Hopkins.... I did not expect much from her, partly because she had refused several times to grant you a permit before." Trotsky Archive.
22. See Trotsky to George Novack, March 9, 1937, in *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1936-37)* (New York, 1978), 228-229.
23. Although Trotsky referred to Herbert Solow as "comrade," he was not a WPUS member but rather a sympathizer who had broken formal ties to Trotskyism before the ACDLT's formation.

24. Trotsky "To all comrades in the committee," March 17, 1937, Trotsky Archive. Emphasis in the original. On the need for haste in putting together the inquiry commission, see also Wolf to Harold Issacs, March 17, 1937. Trotsky Archive. Solow was charged with drawing up the Model Statutes for a Commission of Inquiry. He presented his draft to the ACDLT at its March 1, 1937 meeting. See the minutes of that meeting attached to Novack's letter of March 10, 1937, ACDLT Collection.
25. Trotsky to Suzanne LaFollette, March 15, 1937. *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1936-37)*, 237-238. This letter is interesting because it suggests that Trotsky was not sure of the ability of his comrades on the A.C.D.L.T. to fulfill his orders. In this letter to LaFollette, who was treasurer of the A.C.D.L.T., he wrote of "the necessity for the immediate creation of the inquiry commission." He ended by noting that "I cannot and will not write about this matter to the committee officially.... Please make whatever use of this letter you deem necessary."
26. Committee for Asylum for Trotsky (attached to Quincy Howe to Harry Elmer Barnes, November 12, 1934), Herbert Solow Papers, Box 11, Hoover Institution.
27. In early 1937, representatives or supporters of the USSR, the CPUSA, and others charged that the A.C.D.L.T. was "in political agreement with Leon Trotsky...anti-Soviet...[and] partisan while pretending to be impartial." This "counter campaign" had some success; several members resigned. One of them was Freda Kirchwey, who resigned because, she said, "The whole tone of your publicity has been pro-Trotsky and hostile to the Soviet government. Your releases... assumed his innocence of all charges.... The partisan passions of those who attack the Soviet Government and the Communist Party are, in my opinion, jointly creating a chasm so deep that world-wide popular opposition to fascism is in immediate danger.... I am unwilling to continue on a committee which seems to be contributing its share to the deepening of that separation." Freda Kirchwey to George Novack, February 9, 1937. Trotsky Archive.
28. On the relations between the A.C.D.L.T., the Dewey Commission and the International Commission of Inquiry, and for the membership of the latter, see the "Final Report on the Work," A.C.D.L.T. Collection.
29. The sub-commission consisted of Dewey (Chairman), Carleton Beals, Otto Ruhle, Benjamin Stolberg, and Suzanne LaFollette (Secretary).

Ruhle was a friend of Trotsky and had a weak command of English, the language in which the inquiry was conducted. Alice Ruhle-Gerstel, "No Verses for Trotsky." Previously Dewey, Ruhle, Stolberg and LaFollette had publicly condemned the Moscow trials as travesties of justice. Beals, a renowned Latin American specialist, sought to damage Trotsky's case and resigned from the commission to protest what he claimed was a bias among the sub-commission's members in favor of Trotsky. The comment by Albert Goldman, Trotsky's attorney, to Frank Kluckhohn, a *New York Times* reporter, that "all these people had come down convinced that Trotsky was innocent" did little to reassure Beals and other skeptics of the Dewey Commission's impartiality. Hansen memo of March 17, 1938. Trotsky Archive.

30. The stenographic report of the hearings can be found in *The Case of Leon Trotsky. Report of Hearings on the Charges Made against Him in the Moscow Trials*. (New York, 1937). The commission's findings can be found in *Not Guilty*. (New York, 1937)
31. On the fortunes of the PCM during the Cardenas years, see Barry Carr, "Crisis in Mexican Communism: The Extraordinary Congress of the Mexican Communist Party," *Science & Society*, (Part 1) 50, 4 (Winter 1986-1987), 391-414; (Part 2), 51, 1 (Spring 1987), 43-67; Donald Herman, *The Comintern in Mexico*. (Washington, 1974), 103-146.
32. In early 1937, the CTM chose not to push for Trotsky's deportation. A CTM National Committee report on its "line of conduct" towards Trotsky advised: "First. No importance shall be attached by the proletariat to the presence of Trotsky in Mexico, in order to prevent his stay among us from being exploited to divide the labor movement. Second. The groups associated with the CTM shall engage in no public acts for the purpose of commenting on Trotsky's stay in Mexico. Third. In no case shall Trotsky's expulsion from the country be requested, as the responsibility for his residence in Mexico has been left to the Government of Mexico. Fourth. The National Committee of the CTM will send a circular to all groups belonging to it, explaining the differences existing between our Confederation's program and Trotskyism" As quoted in H. E. Marshburn's Political Report on Mexico, January 26, 1937. National Archives, RG 59. However, this directive was honored more in the breach than in the observance. On the mounting campaign to "get rid of Trotsky," see below.
33. Unsigned letter to President Cardenas, September 9, 1938; Sara Weber to Rose Krasner, September 13, 1938. Trotsky Collection, Box 23,

- folder 23-6; Joseph Hansen to James Cannon, November 12, 1938, Hansen Papers, Box 51 (James P. Cannon folder), Hoover Institution.
34. In January 1939, the Mexican Trotskyists numbered 27. Comité Central, Sección mexicana de la IV Internacional Al Buro Pan-Americano Oriental de la Cuarta Internacional, January 29, 1939, Trotsky Collection, Box 23, folder 23-7, Hoover Institution.
 35. In 1938, membership in Trotskyist parties adhering to the Fourth International numbered 5,485, of which 2,500 belonged to the Socialist Workers Party, the heir to the WPSU. These figures are probably optimistic. *Documents of the Fourth International. The Formative Years (1933-40)* (New York, 1973), 289. See also, Christopher Z. Dobson and Ronald D. Tabor, *Trotskyism and the Dilemma of Socialism* (Westport, CT, 1988), 89-94.
 36. For examples, see: Jan Frankel to Margaret DeSilver, April 24, 1937; Albert Goldman to Charles Cornell, April 4, 1940, Trotsky Archive. Herbert Solow to Margaret DeSilver, April 10, 1937 and undated (April) 1937, Herbert Solow Papers, Box 1, Hoover Institution. See also, Trotsky to Charles Curtiss, *Writings of Leon Trotsky 1939-40*, 346.
 37. Herbert Solow to John Dewey, June 16, 1937, Herbert Solow Papers, Box 1, Hoover Institution. Solow was not without his own network in Washington, since he had been a member of Senator LaFollette's "Committee staff." See Solow to Senator LaFollette, July 16, 1939, Solow Papers, Box 2, Hoover Institution.
 38. Stolberg to Trotsky July 27, 1937; Trotsky to Stolberg, July 31, 1937, Trotsky Archive.
 39. In his letter to Trotsky of August 5, 1937, Stolberg wrote: "The Department of Labor end of things is arranged. Suzanne [LaFollette] tried to [secure a visa] through other channels [at the State Department] and failed." Trotsky Archive.
 40. According to Fishler, an eye, ear, nose and throat specialist, Trotsky had slightly elevated blood pressure (170/95) and marked myopia, but all else was fine. Except for marked hyperopia, Natalia's health was fine. Her blood pressure was 114/80. See his report dated September 1937, Trotsky Archive. On Fishler's party membership, see his letter to James Cannon, March 6, 1940, Trotsky Archive.
 41. Bernard Wolf to Joseph Hansen, July 29, 1937, Trotsky Archive.
 42. Suzanne LaFollette to Trotsky, August 6, 1937, Trotsky Archive. Suzanne LaFollette appears to have solicited other people to make

Trotsky's case in Washington. In an unsigned letter to her in the second half of 1937, one such person wrote: "it would be a mistake for me to make the approach to the State Department. I dont [sic] suppose they would believe I am actually a Trotskyite.... But neutrality in the past seems to me to be the first prerequisite." Unsigned to Suzanne LaFollete, no date, Trotsky Collection, Box 23, folder 23-3 (New York/Coyoacan, July-Dec. 1937), Hoover Institution.

43. For the 1937 correspondence between Alexander Heard of the North Carolina Political Union and Trotsky, see the letters and telegrams dated June 15, July 20, July 28, August 9, August 13, August 20, August 26, September 2, September 30, and October 6, 1937, Trotsky Archive. The legal grounds for denying the visa can be found in a letter from The Legal Advisor, Department of State, to Mr. Hackworth, of August 27, 1937. National Archives, RG 59. Specifically, the Legal Advisor wrote that "the Department has evidence that Trotsky advocates the 'overthrow by force or violence' of governments, including the Government of the United States, as a means of establishing communism throughout the world."
44. I have been unable to find the report of Dewey's meeting with Hull. But in a letter to Alexander Heard dated October 6, 1937, that is, after LaFollette's unsuccessful meeting with the State Department but before Dewey's, Trotsky wrote: "In view of the situation in the Far East, the Administration...find [sic] it advisable not to 'irritate' the Moscow government by any favor accorded to me." Trotsky Archive. Apparently, this was the reason given to LaFollette and, one suspects, to Dewey as well.
45. Trotsky to Herbert Solow, October 15, 1937, Trotsky Archive. There was one brief effort to create a defense committee which apparently was conceived as a successor to the ACDLT, but that effort came to naught. See LaFollette to Trotsky, September 28, 1937, for the first inklings of such a committee; see Solow to Trotsky, February 27, 1938, in which he writes: "Your friends in New York are beginning some moves towards creating a defense organization. Their entire method of procedure would leave me aghast had I not learned several years ago to expect very little of anybody." On March 25, 1938, Solow wrote to Trotsky: "The Defense Committee is disbanding An unfortunate necessity but not a disaster by any means. The vacuum will be filled at the proper moment." Trotsky Archive.
46. For a discussion of the Socialist Party's reaction to Trotsky's position

- on the Spanish Republican government, see Venkataramani, pp 25-27.
47. Wolfe [Trotsky] to Burnham, Cannon, Glotzer and Weber, June 15, 1937, Trotsky Archive. The letter appears under the title "The Situation in the SP and Our Next Tasks," in *Writings of Leon Trotsky. 1936-1937*. (New York, 1978), 334-335. In this source, the salutations read "Dear Comrades"; for the names of those to whom it was addressed see, Venkataramani, 28. Venkataramani worked from the personal papers of James P. Cannon.
 48. Norman Thomas, the Socialist Party's leader and one of the co-founders of the A.C.D.L.T., was deeply embittered by the experience. *Ibid.*, 27-43, esp. note 3, page 43. See also, Myers, *The Prophet's Army*, 123-142.
 49. In his letter to Solow of February 18, 1937, Trotsky wrote: "I am not inclined to receive Frida Kirschwey [sic]. I cannot discuss personally with a man or woman who has doubts about my not being an ally of Hitler or the Mikado.... I have the right to wonder if these people are not agents of the G.P.U., but they do not have the right to wonder if I am an agent of Germany and Japan." See also Trotsky to Solow and Schachtman, March 2, 1937, Trotsky Archive. In early 1938, Trotsky wrote to Kirchwey that: "During the Moscow trials...[s]ome of your close collaborators, like the not unknown Louis Fischer, came out as direct literary agents of Stalin, Vyshinsky, Yezhov.... Have you demarcated yourself from the merchants of lies such as [the journalists] Walter Duranty and Louis Fischer who facilitated the work of Moscow's falsifiers and henchmen?" *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1937-38)* (New York, 1976), 266. Trotsky and his staff were equally hostile to the *New York Times* reporter Kluckhohn, whom Wolf described as a "thorough-going rascal," whose writings were like those of "a skillful GPU agent." Bernard Wolf to Harold Issacs, March 3, 1937; see also van Heijenoort and Wolf to Diego Rivera, March 4, 1937, Trotsky Archive. Trotsky also campaigned to force Carleton Beals, who had resigned from the Dewey Commission in protest, from the editorial board of the magazine *Modern Monthly*. See Trotsky to V. F. Calverton, October 15, 1937, and Max Eastman to Calverton, October 23, 1937, Trotsky Archive. Trotsky wrote to V. F. Calverton, the editor and his supporter, that he would not submit an article to the magazine so long "as the name of Mr. Beals remains on your list" of editorial board members. Trotsky called Beals an agent of Stalinism, which was "the syphilis of the workers' movement. Anybody who chances to be a

direct or indirect carrier of such a contamination should be submitted to a pitiless condemnation. "*Writings of Leon Trotsky (1936-37)*" (New York, 1978), 498. As two of Trotsky's supporters noted, "The real significance of Beals' charge [during the Dewey Commission] is that it could have one consequence: to jeopardize Trotsky's asylum in Mexico...[and] any possibility of Trotsky's ever getting asylum in this country [i.e. the U.S.]." Such was the opinion of Novack and Morrow. See "Report to the National Committee of the Socialist Party." Trotsky Archive.

50. Trotsky to Carlo Tresca, October 6, 1937, Trotsky Archive.
51. *Writings of Leon Trotsky (Supplement 1934-40)* (New York, 1979), 767-768. It is interesting to note that in this letter to Jan Frankel, Trotsky mentioned the possibility of approaching Morris Ernst, the general consul for the ACLU, about this issue. Ernst earlier had tried to get Roosevelt to admit Trotsky to the U.S. after his expulsion from France. Several members of the ACDLT were members of the National Committee of the ACLU.
52. Berle later wrote that "Lombardo Toledano [the anti-Trotskyist leader of the CTM, Mexico's largest trade union] is theoretically visiting Russia on his European trip. Conceivably, there may be some political pressure which suggests to Trotsky that Mexico may not be too healthy for him." Adolf Berle to Moffat, May 27, 1938, National Archives, RG 59.
53. The State Department's fear of the political consequences of admitting Trotsky extended to his wife, Natalia Sedova. In January 1941, Emil Ludwig wrote a moving letter to Roosevelt on behalf of Natalia. Emil Ludwig to President Roosevelt, January 27, 1941. Roosevelt forwarded it to the State Department which was of the opinion that "Mrs. Trotsky and her grandson should not be allowed to enter the United States. She is closely associated with a violent faction of the Communist Party [sic] and I am convinced that her entry into this country would provoke widespread controversy and, possibly, lead to violence." Breckenridge Long to Major General Edwin M. Watson, February 12, 1941. The day before, Roosevelt wrote to his wife, who had been moved by Sedova's plight to urge FDR to consider the request: "This is another of those unfortunate cases where public opinion has to be taken into account. I have no doubt that Mrs. Trotsky is wholly non-political, but the public for another year or two could not see that fact." F.D.R. Memorandum for Mrs. Roosevelt, February 11, 1941. All this correspondence is in

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Papers as President, Official File (Box 4295).
The F.D.R. Library.

54. For correspondence, telegrams and documents relating to the Russell Negrete Blackwell Defense Committee and Blackwell's political history, see Anita Brenner to Comrade Olay, November 2, 1938; Anita Brenner, Secretary of the Blackwell Defense Committee, to the Editor, November 3, 1938; telegram from Olay to Blackwell Committee, November 3, 1938; telegram to Cordell Hull from the Blackwell Defense Committee, November 4, 1938; telegram from Carlo Tresca to CNT, November 2, 1938, Trotsky Archive. One wonders why Trotsky, who allegedly had "no connection of any kind" with Blackwell, should have copies of these documents. See also the documents relating to Russell Negrete in the National Archives, RG 59.
55. Trotsky to James Stewart, November 8, 1938, Trotsky Archive.
56. For a brief political biography of Blackwell, see Anita Brenner to Comrade Olay, November 2, 1938, Trotsky Archive. See also, "Rosalio Negrete," *Cahiers Leon Trotsky*, No. 3 (Juillet-Septembre 1979), 137. See also Harry Milton to Comrades, April 5, 1937, Harry Milton, Milton Papers, Hoover Institution.
57. Robert J. Alexander, *International Trotskyism 1929-1985. A Documented Analysis of the Movement* (Durham, NC, 1991), 607, 781-782. Blackwell left the Workers Party with the Oehler-Stamm group. See also "Latin American Thesis Draft" signed by Blackwell and others, undated, Socialist Workers Party, Box 25 (Latin America, 1930's-1940's), Hoover Institution.
58. Stewart to Secretary of State, September 17, 1938, National Archives, RG 84.
59. Pelham Glassford to Trotsky, August 5, 1938, Trotsky Archive. Glassford was a friend of General Douglas MacArthur and other influential people in Washington. It should be noted that other members of the ACDLT who served on the National Committee of the ACLU at the time were Margaret DeSilver (whose husband founded the ACLU), John Dos Passos, Edward Aylesworth Ross, and Norman Thomas. It is hardly likely that Thomas would have endorsed this effort.
60. Trotsky to Glassford, August 6, 1938, Trotsky Archive.
61. Glassford to Baldwin, August 12, 1938; Baldwin to Glassford, August 22, 1938; October 8, 1938. Glassford communicated the news to Trotsky in his letter of November 14, 1938, Trotsky Archive.

62. Charles Curtiss to Comrades on the International Secretariat of the Fourth International and in the S.W.P., August 18, 1938, Socialist Workers' Party Collection, Box 25 (Materials from Charles Curtiss), Hoover Institution.
63. Trotsky to Goldman, January 7, 1939, Trotsky Archive.
64. An informant for the American Ambassador to Mexico, Josephus Daniels, told him that the Spanish refugees were the driving force behind the intensification of the anti-Trotsky campaign and the purge of the former PCM's leadership. James Stewart to Secretary of State, March 23, 1940, April 10, 1940, National Archives, RG 84; Daniels to Secretary of State, April 23, 1940, National Archives, RG 59; Adolf Berle to James Stewart, February 14, 1940; and Robert McGregor Memorandum of Conversation with Sr. Indalcecio Prieto, September 28, 1940, National Archives, RG 84.
65. On the State Department's concerns, see Assistant Secretary of State Adolf Berle's circulars to embassies and consulates in Latin America dated November 15, 1937; March 7, 1938; November 25, 1938; and December 27, 1939; William Blocker to Secretary of State, March 11 and March 21, 1940, National Archives RG 59.
66. For the fullest account, see Joseph Hansen's memo on the Dies affair dated December 14, 1940. Matthews' telegram to Trotsky and Trotsky's to Matthews are dated October 12, 1939, Trotsky Archive.
67. Trotsky and his staff followed coverage of the Dies Committee's hearings in the various U. S. newspapers to which Trotsky subscribed. For a list of news publications and newspapers in Trotsky's library, see T15764, Trotsky Archive.
68. Goldman to Trotsky, November 2, 1939, Trotsky Archive.
69. Trotsky was especially interested in what constituted the legal definition of an agent of a foreign government. See Hansen to Goldman, November 14, 1939. See also Goldman to Hansen, November 17, 1939, Trotsky Archive.
70. *Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1939-1940*, 434, note 106.
71. *Ibid.*, 110-111.
72. Emphasis in the original. Samuel Galloway, Darin Herron, Richard Babb Whitten, Elsa Ruth Herron, Blacky Williams, Mary Allen to Trotsky, nd., Trotsky Archive.
73. Hansen [Trotsky] to Friends, November 28, 1939, Trotsky Collection, Box 29, folder 12-29, Hoover Institution.
74. McGregor Memo to Murphy, December 5, 1939, National Archives,

RG 84.

75. Stewart to Secretary of State, December 9, 1939, National Archives, RG 84.
76. Berle confided to his diary his anxieties about Trotsky's appearing before the Dies Committee: "Trotsky might give some information on Communist activities in the United States; but his real purpose will be to expound the theory of the World Revolution to a thumping audience and the accompaniment of headlines, Kleig lights, and everything else. He knows more about hitting the newspaper than the Dies Committee does, though they have done pretty well. Further if he is assassinated on the way to the United States by some Stalinite, we shall have troublesome times; and-horror of horrors-the Mexicans may decide they don't want him back, and then we have him on our hands. I doubt if the Dies Committee will take our advice. Dies likes a headline, too." *The Diary of Adolf A. Berle, 1937-1941*, Friday, December 8, 1939, 3-4, FDR Library.
77. Hansen memo, December 14, 1939, Trotsky Archive.
78. James Stewart to Secretary of State, January 11, 1940, National Archives, RG 59.
79. Trotsky's statement to *Excelsior*, December 6, 1939, as found in Declaration Made by Leon Trotsky Appearing in the *Excelsior* of December 6, 1939, attached to Stewart to Secretary of State, December 8, 1939, National Archives, RG 84. See also Trotsky's public statements on January 12, 1940, in which he stated that: "Upon setting foot on Mexican soil, I voluntarily pledged not to intervene in the domestic or foreign politics of this country. Anyone who maintains the contrary is deliberately lying." *Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1939-40*, 138.
80. James Stewart to Secretary of State, March 23, 1940, National Archives, RG 59.
81. James Stewart to Secretary of State, April 23, 1940, National Archives, RG 59.
82. On Rivera's May 29th request for a Border Crossing Card, see McGregor Memorandum of May 31, 1940, in which he discusses his meeting with Rivera. See also George Shaw to Secretary of State, May 31, 1940. On the convening of the I.N.S. Special Board of Inquiry, see Herndon Goforth to George Shaw, June 5, 1940 and June 6, 1940, National Archives, RG 84. For press coverage of Rivera's admission, see *The Brownsville Herald*, June 4 and 5, 1940, and *The Brownsville News*, June 5, 1940. At the time he sought admission to the U. S.,

Rivera had a contract to paint a mural for the Golden Gate International Exposition. Shaw wrote to the Exposition to inform them of Rivera's departure. Timothy Pflueger to George Shaw, June 14, 1940, National Archives, RG 84.

83. See Shaw Memorandum dated September 10, 1938, National Archives, RG 84.

84. The quote is from Stewart's memo attached to his letter to Secretary of State, December 8, 1939, National Archives, RG 84. Stewart took much of his information of Rivera's pronouncement from *Excelsior*, December 8, 1939. At this time, Rivera also stated that "in case statements are made before the Dies Committee, those attributed to me must be kept separate from those of Trotsky...[for] I have nothing to do with this gentleman." Stewart to Secretary of State, December 8, 1939, National Archives, RG 84.

85. Rivera told the Hearst correspondent, A. Constantine, that he was willing to provide the Dies Committee with information on both communist and Nazi activities in Mexico. Josephus Daniels to Secretary of State, December 8, 1940, FDR Presidential Papers, Secretary's File, Box 44.

86. In early January 1940, Rivera provided the names of fifty alleged P.C.M. members who held high government office. He also claimed knowledge of campaign assassinations in Mexico. Shaw to Secretary of State, January 5, 1940. On January 11, 1940, Rivera met with American Consul McGregor in Rivera's home. Stewart to Secretary of State, January 17, 1940. Rivera met with American officials on either one or two other occasions (the sources are unclear about this). Stewart to Secretary of State, February 16, 1940, National Archives, RG 84. Messersmith memo dated January 26, 1940, FDR Presidential Papers, Secretary's File, Box 44. Rivera met with McGregor again on March 2, 1940. See the McGregor memo attached to Stewart to Secretary of State, March 4, 1940, National Archives, RG 84. Although Rivera gave to American officials a considerable number of names, the State Department considered Rivera's views and information unreliable. Berle to Stewart, March 12, 1940, National Archives, RG 59. For a full discussion of Rivera's role as an informant for the U. S. State Department, see William Chase and Dana Reed, "El Extrano Caso de Diego Rivera y el Departamento de Estado," *Zona Abierta del Financiero*, (Mexico) vol. II, num. 61, 19 Noviembre 1993.

87. See Daniels to Secretary of State, April 23 and 24, 1940, National

- Archives, RG 59.
88. Daniels to Secretary of State, April 24, 1940, National Archives, RG 59.
89. In a letter to Sr. Don Leandro Sanchez Salazar, the chief of police of the Federal District, dated May 31, 1940, Trotsky wrote: "I have nothing in common with the political activities of Diego Rivera. We broke our personal relations fifteen months ago" and have had "no direct or indirect contact since then." Trotsky Archive. Nonetheless, there were mutual friends who may have passed information about one to the other. If this were the case, Trotsky probably knew more about Rivera's activities than vice versa. One possible source of information was Leah Brenner, Rivera's secretary, who fled Mexico on June 2, 1940, the day after receiving a threatening note. Leah Brenner Protection Case, R. Kenneth Oakley, Reporting Officer, June 2, 1940, National Archives, RG 84. Leah was the sister of Anita Brenner, an active member of the A.C.D.L.T., the secretary of the Russell Negrete Blackwell Defense Committee, and a friend of many of Trotsky's supporters. Another possible source was Charles Curtiss, a Trotskyist and mutual friend of Rivera and Trotsky, who maintained regular correspondence with and provided material support to the exiled revolutionary. Curtiss sent to Trotsky several reports of his meetings with Rivera. In a signed statement, dated August 12, 1940, Charles Curtiss wrote: "During my stay in Mexico, from July 4, 1938 to approximately July 15, 1939, I was in close association with Diego Rivera and L.D. Trotsky.... I served as an intermediary between them." See also: Curtiss Report of a Meeting with Diego at 5 p.m., March 11, 1939; Rivera's edited version of that Report, entitled Report of Meeting with Rivera on March 11, 1939; and Curtiss' Memorandum of Diego Rivera-Curtiss Conversation of January 20, 1939, Trotsky Archive. On the material support given to Trotsky by Curtiss, see the letter from Trotsky, dated August 16, 1940, in *Writings of Leon Trotsky 1939-40*, 346.
90. *Ibid.*, 335.
91. A Trotsky Defense Fund was established shortly after the attack. See James Cannon and Farrell Dobbs "To All Local Branches" of the S.W.P., July 11, 1940; Score Board--Trotsky Defense Fund, no date, Trotsky Collection, Box 23, folder 23-11, Hoover Institution.
92. At its July 4-6, 1940 convention, the national teachers' union, S.T.E.R.M., called for Trotsky's expulsion. E.W. Eaton to Secretary of State, July 16, 1940, National Archives, RG 59.

93. In his letter to Charles Curtiss of August 16, 1940, Trotsky wrote:
 "More than two and a half months of my time has been almost exclusively devoted to the investigation" of the May attack. *Writings of Leon Trotsky 1939-40*, 346.
94. *Ibid.*, 233.
95. For a brief survey of these accusations, see *Ibid.*, 305-315, 348-371.
96. *Ibid.*, 182.
97. *Ibid.*, 232.
98. *Ibid.*, 223-227. The original letter appeared in *Socialist Appeal*, June 15, 1940, in abbreviated form.
99. *Writings of Leon Trotsky, (1939-40)*, 231.
100. Trotsky wrote the text of this statement in Russian and then had his secretaries translate it into Spanish. The Russian version is entitled "'Futuro", "Populiar", "Vos de Mekhiko" i agenty GPU."; the Spanish version is entitled "'Futuro y los agentes de la G.P.U., Trotsky Archive. An English translation of the Spanish version can be found in *Writings of Leon Trotsky 1939-40*, 305-315. The quotes in the text are from this source except where noted.
100. *Ibid.*, 227. Emphasis in the original.
101. *Ibid.*, 246. Emphasis in the original.
102. "O Lombardo Toledano," Trotsky Archive. The piece is undated but from the context appears to have been written in late June 1940. Nor did Trotsky limit his accusations to Mexico. He charged that Harry Block, an American correspondent for the *Nation*, was "a close collaborator of Lombardo Toledano, the notorious political agent of the GPU in Mexico. Harry Block is the managing editor of *Futuro*, the foul, slanderous monthly of Lombardo Toledano.... The 'authority' of Harry Block is based upon the fact that he is considered the agent of the Soviet Embassy in Washington in relations with the CTM. The head of the Soviet agency in Washington is [Ambassador] Oumansky, who made his diplomatic career out of being an agent of the GPU. Consequently, Harry Block is the confidential go-between for two agents of the GPU, Oumansky and Lombardo Toledano." *Writings of Leon Trotsky 1939-40*, 292. See also *ibid.*, 312. Although attributed to Trotsky, Joseph Hansen authored the attack on Block. Joseph Hansen ["On Harry Block"], Trotsky Archive.
103. *Writings of Leon Trotsky 1939-40*, 348.
104. *Ibid.*, 360.
105. *Ibid.*, 371. It is worth noting that Trotsky also sought to tie *Futuro*

to the Nazis as well. On July 24, 1940, Joseph Hansen wrote to Albert Goldman and sent him a list of 17 companies which advertised in *Futuro*. "After the signing of the [Nazi-Soviet] pact there was a marked increase of advertising in the columns of *Futuro* from these companies. It would be very good if we had some evidence to prove that these companies are really under German domination." Trotsky Archive.

106. Many of the general lines of argument regarding the role of the Comintern and Soviet agencies in Latin America can be found in Berle's communications with Latin American consulates. See note 67.
107. In the aftermath of the May 24th attack, suspicions of the PCM's role resulted in public calls for its being outlawed. Such calls compounded existing problems within the PCM. See Barry Carr, "The Extraordinary Congress."
108. See note 80.
109. McGregor's memorandum is dated July 13, 1940 and is attached to George P. Shaw to Secretary of State, July 15, 1940, National Archives, RG 84. Upon receipt, the State Department transmitted McGregor's memo to the FBI. Of Trotsky, McGregor wrote: "Trotsky undoubtedly views himself as a most important figure rather than a simple refugee in exile. He describes Soviet policy toward Mexico as directed first of all with an eye to the United States and secondly toward him." It is interesting to note that in Trotsky's mail log, in which all outgoing letters were recorded, two letters were recorded as having been sent to a Stewart: one from "W" (presumably Walter O'Rourke, Trotsky's secretary) and the other from Trotsky. Neither of them is in the Trotsky Archive. Whether or not Stewart refers to James Stewart of the U.S. Consulate's staff is impossible to ascertain. One can not therefore rule out the possibility that Trotsky had communicated something to the Consulate's staff before the May 24 assault.
110. George P. Shaw to Secretary of State, July 18, 1940, National Archives, RG 84. The information about Riqui was forwarded to the State Department which forwarded it to the FBI. See J. Edgar Hoover to Special Agent in Charge, New York, September 18, 1940, FBI Files.
111. On the September 3 meetings, see Memorandum for the File written by Robert G. McGregor, September 4, 1940; on the September 4 meeting and the Fourth International memorandum, see George P. Shaw to Secretary of State, September 4, 1940, National Archives, RG 84.

112. Robert G. McGregor, Memorandum of Conversation, September 14, 1940, National Archives, RG 84.
113. Trotsky to John Glenner, March 31, 1939, Trotsky Archive.
114. For the details of Mercador's activities and contacts with Trotsky prior to the murder, see: unsigned and undated summary of the murder, Herbert Solow Papers, Box 11, Carlo Tresca folder; Natalia Sedov Trotsky statement, December 1949, Box 11, Natalia Sedov Trotsky folder, Hoover Institution; Leandro A. Sanchez Salazar, *Murder in Mexico: The Assassination of Leon Trotsky* (London, 1950); Issac Don Levine, *The Mind of an Assassin* (New York, 1959).
115. David Alfaro Siqueiros, *Me Llamaban El Coronelazo*. (Mexico City, 1977), 364; Philip Stein, *Siqueiros. His Life and Works*. (New York, 1994), 116-119.
116. See Levine and Sanchez Salazar.
117. Boris A. Starkov, "Narkom Ezhov," in J. Arch Getty and Roberta T. Manning, *Stalinist Terror. New Perspectives* (New York, 1993), 38.
118. Starkov, 38.